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Hugh Cecil Earl of Lonsdale.

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THE HORSE

HIS BEAUTIES AND DEFECTS.

BY A "KNOWING HAND."

LONDON—WILLIAM TEGG.

INTRODUCTION.

By a detailed series of graphic and descriptive illustrations, it is the intention of the Author of this Work to show the good and bad points in that most noble and useful animal, the Horse. He has adopted the mode of detaching the various parts of the subject, because, by a comparison of the distinct appearances, the general impression upon the memory of the reader is likely to be much stronger than could result from the study of any treatise of a less abstracted nature; to understand which, a knowledge of anatomy, or a constant reference to some scientific work is indispensable.

There is no animal whose countenance combines such correct and powerful expressions of character. The physiognomy of the Horse, therefore, illustrating the different passions to which he is subject, as well as the natural bias of his temper and disposition, is an important branch of study to breeders, country gentlemen, and to inexperienced purchasers; for it is generally considered, that the disposition and temper of the animal is an object of more consequence to timid riders and drivers than any slight bodily blemish.

In this point of view, therefore, the Author flatters himself that his Work will be found useful; and as his remarks are the result of the most attentive observation during many years, entirely

devoted to the pleasures of the field, he trusts that the general principles which he has laid down, as well with respect to power, strength, and the various points of action, as to the physiognomical character and figure of the horse, will be found clearly elucidated in the following Series.

The hints to inexperienced purchasers will, it is hoped, be of considerable use in preventing those disappointments to which, as a class, they are particularly liable.

1866.

Plate I.

PLATE I.

Figure 1.—The head here introduced, in its character, very nearly reaches the perfection of good temper, spirit, and beauty: such a head ought progressively to diminish in weight and size as it approaches the nose. If pressed by the thumb, the cheek bones should appear to be merely covered by skin, and the jaw underneath should be hollow, with the skin loose. By comparing these remarks with the figure, and contrasting its form with the other subjects in this Plate, the reader will possess himself of a perfect knowledge of these requisites in the choice or judgment of an animal.

Figure 2.—Represents a head, not inferior, perhaps, to the former in temper, but wholly deficient both in spirit and in beauty. This head is heavy, and badly set on to the neck; the jaw-bone and gullet forming almost an angle: the nose is encumbered with a great deal of what is technically called *leather*. However perfect this animal may be in all his other points, he will prove heavy and sluggish, and always carry his head most awkwardly and unpleasantly.

Figure 3.—Is the front view of a head well-proportioned, and marked with an expression that bids fair for good temper and spirit: narrow at the setting on of the ears, which, when the look of the animal is marked with particular anxiety, should be brought nearly together at the points, extending in bone towards the eyes, which ought to look rather sideways than straight forward. Let the reader compare the decrease down to the nose, with *Figure* 4.

Figure 4.—Shows the front view of a head, heavy in spirit and disposition; broad at the point or crown of the head: the increase on the eyebrow is composed of flesh and skin; the direction of the eyes, looking forward, and thence downward to the nose, displays but little deviation in substance. The distinction will be easily perceived by a reference to *Figure* 3.

Fig. 2.

Fig. 3.

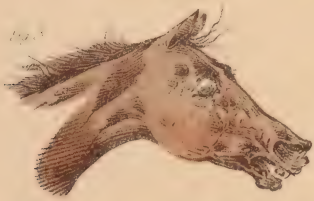

Fig. 4.

PLATE II.

Figure 1.—Is the expression of rage, with a great deal of vice. This passion will always be conspicuous in the countenance of the horse possessed of these bad qualities; but not to the extent shown in the Plate, unless provoked. Horses of this disposition, by having even a finger or stick pointed at them, will give full force to this character. Many are *taught* this vice; but whether inherent in the disposition, or acquired, the animals which possess it are still very dangerous.

Figure 2.—This character of countenance, from repeated instances that I have met with, I consider to possess more malicious vice than *Figure* 1. The horse from which this character was taken, although a good worker when once in harness, is one of the most ferocious animals of the tribe denominated tame.

Figure 3.—The character of terror, which is the prominent mark of this head, is by some classed among the vices of this animal. If it be not a vice, however, it is one of the most troublesome faults, incident to the horse; for it embraces all the consequences of all the vices which he can possess; a terrified horse being more to be dreaded than one actually vicious.

Figure 4.—Represents a horse of a sulky character, as is conspicuously shown in the countenance; an animal of this type, although in some cases rather to be dreaded than otherwise, is sometimes very good at work. The obstinacy of this character, however, not unfrequently turns to restiveness. It is a subject which may be useful, but never can be pleasant.

Plate 3

Fig 1

Fig 2

Fig 3

Fig 4

PLATE III.

These heads are taken from good horses for their separate uses.

Figure 1.—Is as good a hackney as ever was mounted for work, but by no means pleasant in temper or manner of carriage. It is very seldom that a vicious or restive horse can ride light or playful in hand. I have proved this kind of animal to be exceedingly useful for long and hard journeys, but one that entails a large amount of fatigue on the rider.

Figure 2.—This character is good in every respect, beautiful in its shape and action, extremely light and pleasant to ride, and although rather playful, perfectly gentle.

Figure 3.—I introduce this head, considering it one of the handsomest I ever saw, and have endeavoured with my pencil to embody the most perfect expression of beauty and spirit.

Figure 4.—Is a common-place head and neck. Although the animal from which this is drawn is a very good slow horse, it is twenty to one, with such a form, against his being good for anything but a cart. The head is well shaped by itself, but heavy and badly connected, and such a horse could never either be riden or driven pleasantly.

Plate 4

PLATE IV.

Figure 1.—Is a fore-leg formed for speed, and, perhaps, action, but not calculated for permanency. The plate of the knee being much lower than it ought to be, the horse must be considered as a dangerous road animal.

Figure 2.—Is formed to do much work, and last long at it.

Figure 3.—Is good in substance, but rather round, and too straight.

Figure 4.—Is a pair of legs well formed for strength and action.

Figure 5.—Displays the front view of legs badly formed, being what the dealers call made as a dancing-master ought to be; but still if the toe, or point of the hoof, deviate at all from the straight line, it should be this way, as the contrary is extremely dangerous on the road, and indeed anywhere else.

Figure 6.—A leg made for neither speed nor power, being flat and poor in the arm, round and weak in the leg, thin and long in the pastern, and large in the hoof.

Figure 7.—A pair of legs worse than *Figure* 5, being weak, badly formed, and hardly good for anything.

Figure 8.—This appearance is seldom formed by Nature, it is occasioned by hard work, straining, &c.

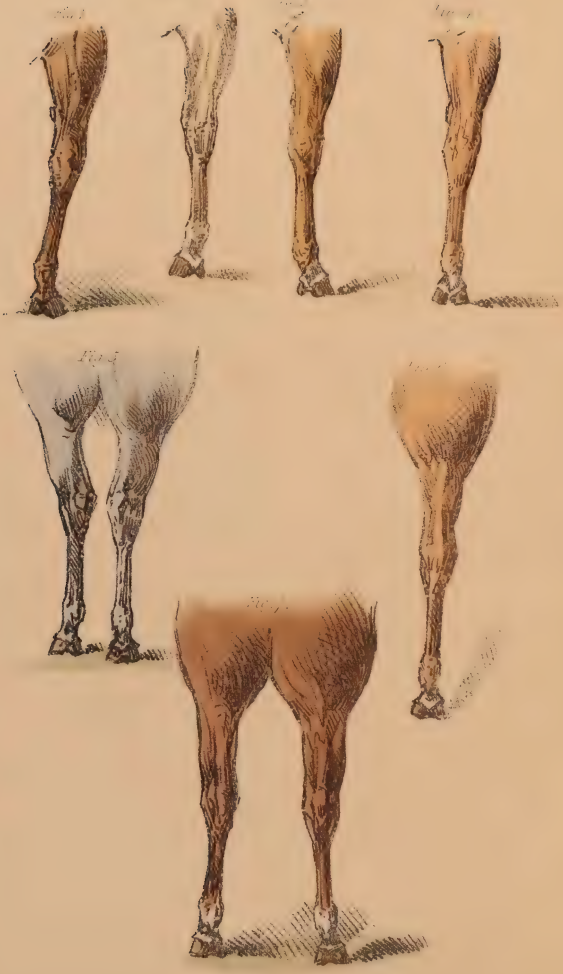

PLATE V.

The four first figures are intended to show the back of the off fore-legs.

Figure 1.—Is standing firmly on the ground, but slightly turned out, which, as I have before observed, is better than turned in. It is generally considered that it should stand perfectly straight in a back view.

Figure 2.—Is the contrary of *Figure* 1, being much turned and bent at the knee. This is a bad leg, without one point to recommend it.

Figure 3.—Is very different to *Figure* 2, but equally bad, being calf-kneed, and having the hoof turned much out.

Figure 4.—Is a leg square and firmly set on the ground, and likely to stand work.

Figure 5.—Is the best of two evils, standing near together at the hocks. The legs should stand like *Figure* 6, and both exactly alike; but when that is not to be obtained, the form of *Figure* 5 is to be preferred. Some people are fond of the form of *Figure* 7, but it can never last, and must produce an unpleasant action both to the sight and feeling.

Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.

Fig. 3.

Fig. 4.

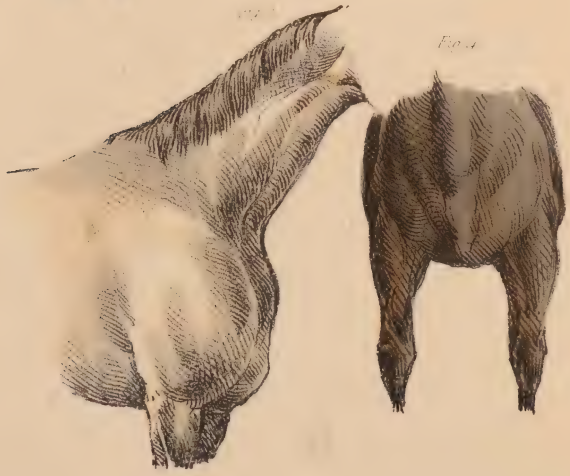

PLATE VI.

Figure 1.—I introduce this subject for the beauty of its neck and setting of the fore-leg, both of which are remarkably good. The shoulder is well formed, but not sufficient in depth; the arm, or upper part of the thigh, should be set well forward, the elbow turned out, and free from the brisket. A horse possessed of those points will seldom fail of having good action.

Figure 2.—The front view of the breast formed for strength, beauty, and action. Compare with *Figure* 4.

Figure 3.—The neck and shoulders badly formed, the neck being of an equal breadth and substance, heavy and thick in the shoulder; broad on the blade, fore-legs standing too far under the body; the breast and point of the shoulder heavy, without any mark of muscle. See *Figure* 1.

Figure 4.—Is the front view of a breast with many bad points; sound and heavy in chest, tucked up in the brisket, and legs badly set on. Compare with *Figure* 2.

PLATE VII.

Figure 1.—Is the figure of a useful and handsome looking horse. The carcass should be shaped somewhat like a cask; the hucks not too much hid in the flesh, nor yet particularly prominent; rather flat in the flank; plenty of hard projecting muscle on the thigh. The hocks should look and feel like entire bone covered with skin.

Figure 2.—Is what may be called very pretty, and perhaps be useful in its way: heavy and round in the flank and thigh; the legs standing almost perpendicular. Speed or action cannot be expected from a horse so formed, though he may prove safe and pleasant to a gentle rider, or be well calculated to walk or canter on the London stones.

Figure 3.—Is formed for power and speed; a form to be desired in a hunter; the thigh and hock well furnished, but rather too much cramped, or bent, to deserve the character of beauty: animals thus shaped, almost without exception, prove speedy, and are generally good leapers.

Figure 4.—Is that of a common, well looking quarter, with many good points, and showy, but not likely to be famous for either speed or action.

PLATE VIII.

Figure 1.—Is the quarter of a horse well formed, being strong and handsome, well marked with muscle and bone, and not overburthened with flesh; but standing at too great a distance between the hocks.

Figure 2.—This figure, although rather raw in the hucks, and possessing a great deal of prominent bone, is still better adapted for speed and action than *Figure* 1; the hocks being nearer together, but still standing straight, give him the power of quicker action, and longer throws in the gallop. The mare from which this was taken was a remarkably good and well-tried hunter.

Figure 3.—A horse with such a quarter as this, may possibly be useful, if quiet, to a timid lady or gentleman, who do not extend their ride beyond six or eight miles in one day. If well formed in other parts, he may be called a very pretty plump and showy *tit;* but like many other pets, will be of no use for hard work.

Plate 9

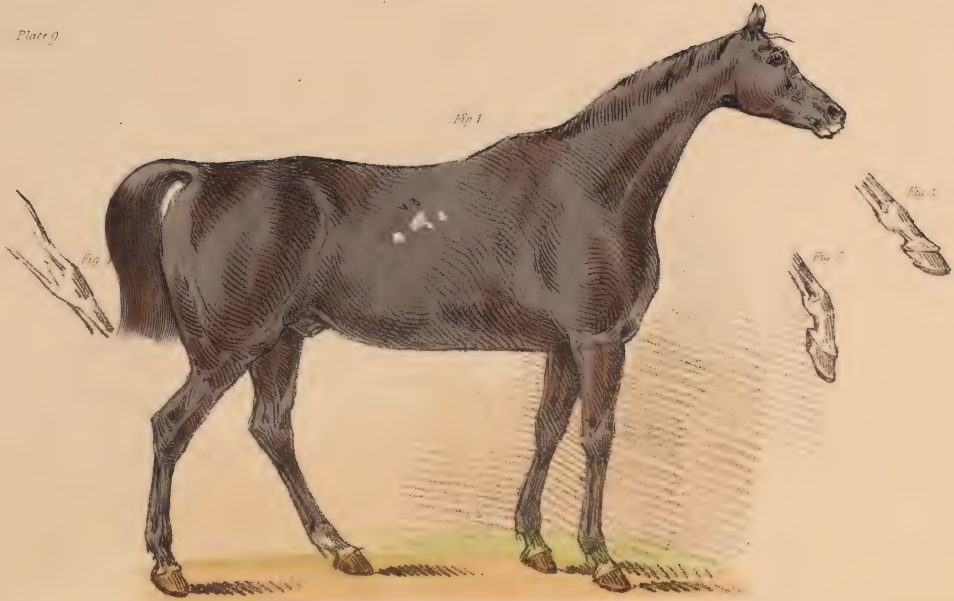

PLATE IX.

The animal from which this drawing was made was accounted one of the finest figures in England; although at the time the portrait was taken he was ten years old, and had done a great deal of work, both in the field and in harness. A small head and neck are considered a great beauty in a horse; and in the original of this drawing, I think they were the least I ever saw, in proportion to the body.

I have depicted this horse in the action of walking, for which he was particularly famous, and have paid much attention to his method of delivering the knee and foot. In walking fast he did not move two legs at the same time; for example, in lifting the near leg before, and the off leg behind, he raised one immediately after the other, bearing the shoulder well forward before he took the foot from the ground; and having raised the feet, he delivered the knee in the form of *Figure* 4; and the foot as *Figure* 2, which, on a comparison with *Figure* 3, the reader will find, gives the animal a manifest advantage: for in the action of *Figure* 3, he must lose much ground; while in the action of *Figure* 2, his gain would be equal to three inches at every step, which, in a mile, would make a difference of a hundred yards—a very material consideration in a match. The quarters of this animal were long, and very strong; and he delivered the hind foot well under the body, bending it, at the same time, at the hock, and rising well in the toe, or point of the foot of the standing leg. At every step in walking, and indeed in all other action, the shoulder should be seen to play free; for it may be laid down as a general maxim, that a horse confined in the shoulders can never have good action.

Plate 10

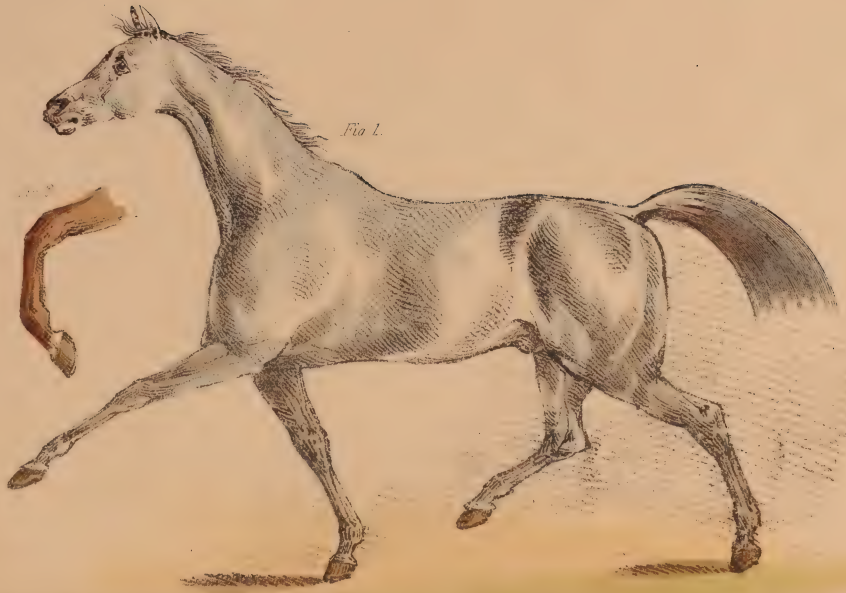

Fig 1.

Fig 3

PLATE X.

THE TROT.

This pace being the only one used in harness, requires particular notice, as there is a great variety in this action. The annexed Plate is intended to show the plain spanking trot, in which the horse should carry his head well up, and, when out of harness, the nose pointed forward. In the step, the shoulder should be thrown well out, the knee rather straight, the hoof pointed forward, and put to the ground, as a soldier is taught to march; not by putting the heel down first, nor the hoof full on the ground, but the point of the foot should touch the ground slightly before the heel, with an even motion, without a catch or jerk; the shoulder, at the same time, leaning well over the bearing leg, so as to make the reach the longer, as in *Figure* 1; the quarter being thrown well under, but not so far as to occasion an over-reach. I have heard many people, who are great fanciers in trotting horses, admire the wide action behind: but I cannot agree with them, as I think it excessively awkward and ugly, and a great sign of weakness. I have never found horses with such action able to perform long journeys.

If a horse were to use his fore-legs in the form of *Figure* 2, he must lose considerable ground at every step, and be liable to trip and fall at any little roughness in the road, and must lose in speed, by delivering the hind foot as *Figure* 3.

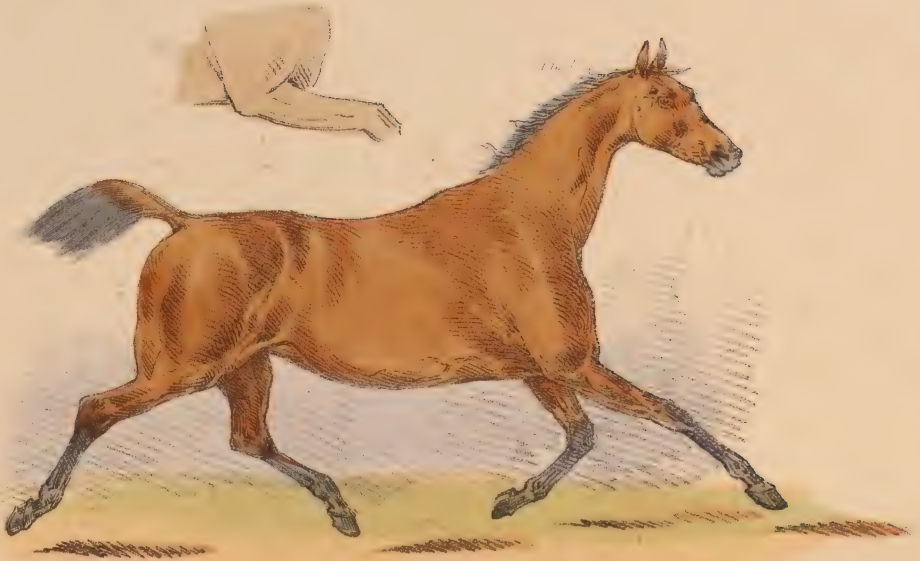

PLATE XI.

THE RUNNING TROT.

Most of our very best trotters have this action, which, in some degree, is between the trot and gallop. It is a very easy pace for the rider, but very deficient in elegance. The pace is not suited for any kind of carriage.

The subject from which this Plate was taken was very finely formed for strength and action; the legs are delivered in the same way as in the plain trot, but much faster and nearer the ground, and with a sort of scramble, far from pleasing to the eye. As in the plain trot, the shoulder should be thrown well forward, so that in a side view it should hide the breast. Compare the shoulder of *Figure* 1 with that of *Figure* 2.

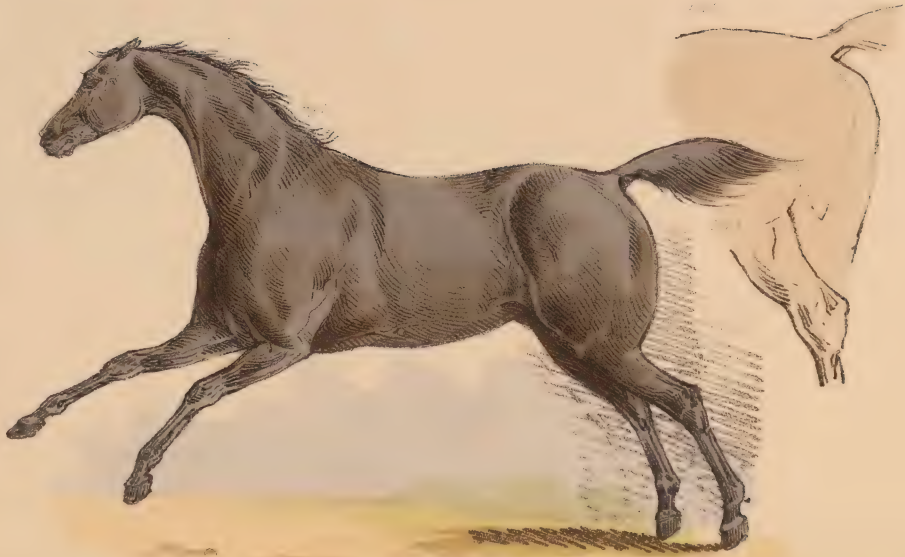

PLATE XII.

THE CANTERER, OR LADY'S HORSE.

The horse selected for this purpose should be particularly light in the head and neck, the play or springing appearance of the head giving great beauty to this action. The horse from which this drawing was made was pretty and showy, without having the power of anything like speed or good action; the buttocks round, without any show of muscle; tight in the hocks and legs; although short and strong in the pastern, his legs are not well able to carry his carcass.

This description of horse in the horse-dealer's hands is very apt to please, and catch the attention of a person not much in the habit of purchasing. I never had but one of this sort in my possession, which I bought during a lameness occasioned by an accident in hunting. He was, like the present subject, very showy, and by most people called handsome; but the first journey I took him, (a distance of only eighteen miles,) he performed with such extreme difficulty in three hours, that I never chose to mount him again. When any horse has power of speed and action, the play or movement of the bones and muscles is perceptible. The horse that is round and puffed in the quarter very seldom has strength or speed. Compare with *Figures* 2 and 3. The hock, which is flat and straight underneath, must be deficient in strength.

Plate 13

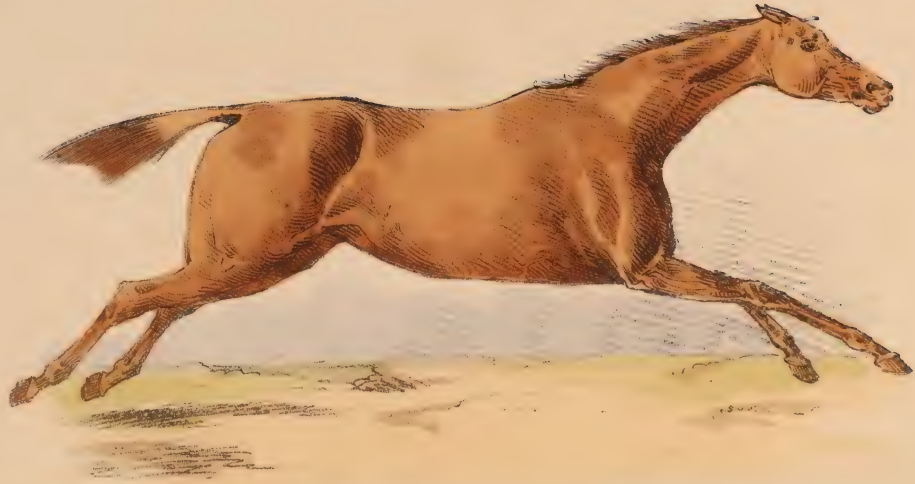

PLATE XIII.

THE GALLOP.

In the race-horse the necessary points differ from the hunter and road-horse. In the first place he is not got so much up in the forehand, which makes a great difference in his appearance. The ewe-necked horses are in general speedy, although this qualification is by no means desirable for any other purpose. It is commonly supposed that length in the pastern is indispensable in the race-horse, but this opinion appears to me to be very erroneous, except as it regards a light weight and a short course. I have taken notice that the best horses of the present day are well formed, and strong in the legs. In full action the leg should be thrown well out, with a quick stroke, rather near the ground than otherwise. All the legs should point straight forward, and appear to act with ease to themselves. If a horse should rock, that is, throw his quarters from one side to the other, he never can be speedy; he should seem to glide over the surface of the ground without any symptoms of violent action. Horses vary greatly in the gather, or method of bringing their legs together after being well opened in the reach. If he makes the stride too far, it will oblige him to throw up his back like a hog, to form the gather. Any action varying from a direct line forward must impede his progress. All horses should gallop nearly on the same principle; but it is necessary that military horses and dashing roadsters should raise themselves more on their haunches, and, as it is commonly called, fight a little more with their forehand.

Plate 14.

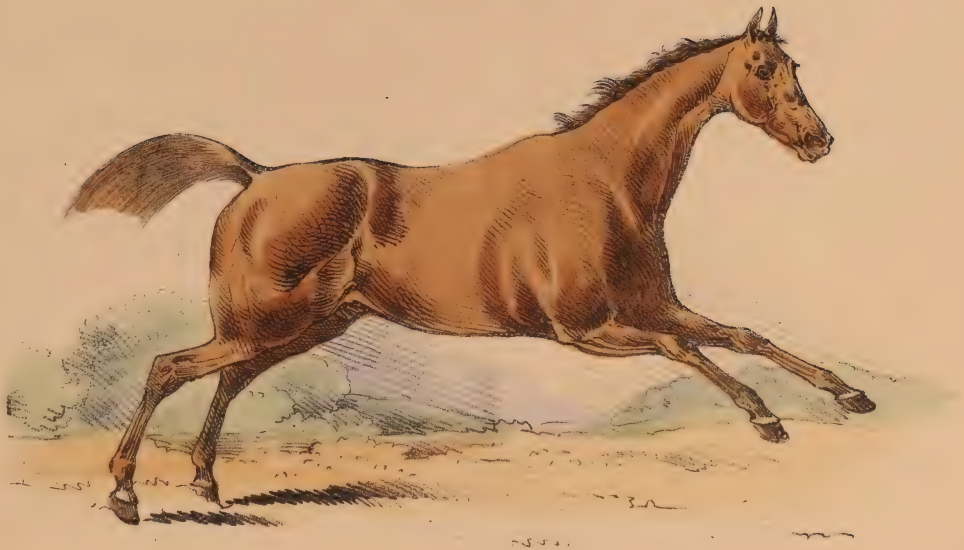

PLATE XIV.

THE HUNTER'S GALLOP.

The hunter, although he may be as thorough-bred as the racer, is obliged to go through deep and heavy grounds, which will occasion him to use a different method of galloping from that of the latter. It is not necessary that he should lay himself out in the reach like the race-horse; if he did, the difficulty he would find in gathering himself again would knock him up in ten minutes; or, at any rate, would greatly distress and disqualify him for a long day. His strokes should be short and regular, not throwing himself much off the balance. The hunter should also have the immediate power of extending or diminishing his length of stride: for until a horse can accomplish this part of his business, he never can make a good leaper, much less a safe one. Having myself been much in the habit of riding young and violent horses with fox-hounds, I am well acquainted with the great difficulty and danger there is in leaping them before they are possessed of this power and knowledge.

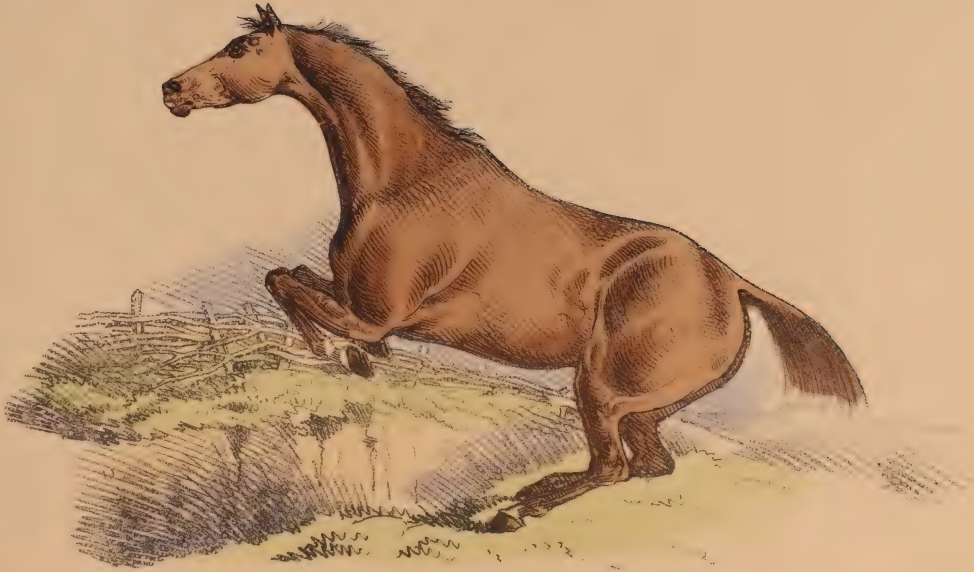

PLATE XV.

LEAPING.

The art of steady leaping, and to do it well, is more difficult for a horse to acquire than any other. As I mentioned under the head of Hunting, the horse should be fully competent to the task of measuring his ground; the quarters should be thrown well under him at the last stride, so that he can form a centre to his weight on his hind feet when he is at full rise, and be able in a standing leap to keep that balance, until he feels able to make his throw or spring; and at the moment he opens his fore-legs, the hind ones should be caught quite under the body: for in slow and steady leaps, it is almost impossible for the horse to extend his legs behind, and leap with the same safety that he can when gathered together; for instance, in double leaps, where the horse is not able to see on the other side (which is very often the case), by throwing his quarters under him, the animal has the power to renew his leap with safety.

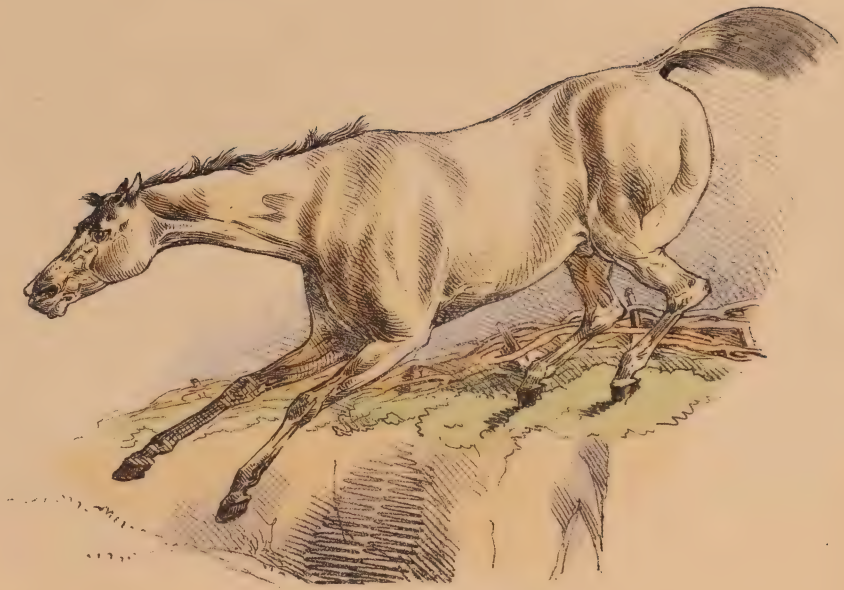

PLATE XVI.

LEAPING.

The fall or pitch, where there are double ditch fences, and fences with the ditch from you, requires particular attention. It appears to me, that more falls are occasioned by the want of knowledge of this action of leaping, on the part of the horse, than by any other description of ignorance or mistake. As soon as the spring is made, as mentioned in Plate XV., the hind-legs should be so thrown over the fence, as to give a fine purchase, and the horse ought to appear to have almost the power of retracting his leap, if necessary. This shows that the horse has confidence in his own powers; and although I have heard many sportsmen declare that this confidence frequently tends to make the animal a short leaper, yet, from many circumstances which have come within my own knowlegde, I am clearly of opinion that the assertion is not borne out by the fact. In my judgment, confidence will give the animal the power to direct his fore-feet to any point he may desire, within his compass; and for his own safety he will always cover enough space, unless prevented by his rider, which too frequently occurs. In all cases where the leap is difficult, so as to require care and knowledge in the horse, instead of courage or rashness, there cannot be a doubt that the animal ought to be left to his own discretion, without being fettered by any supposed assistance on the part of the rider.

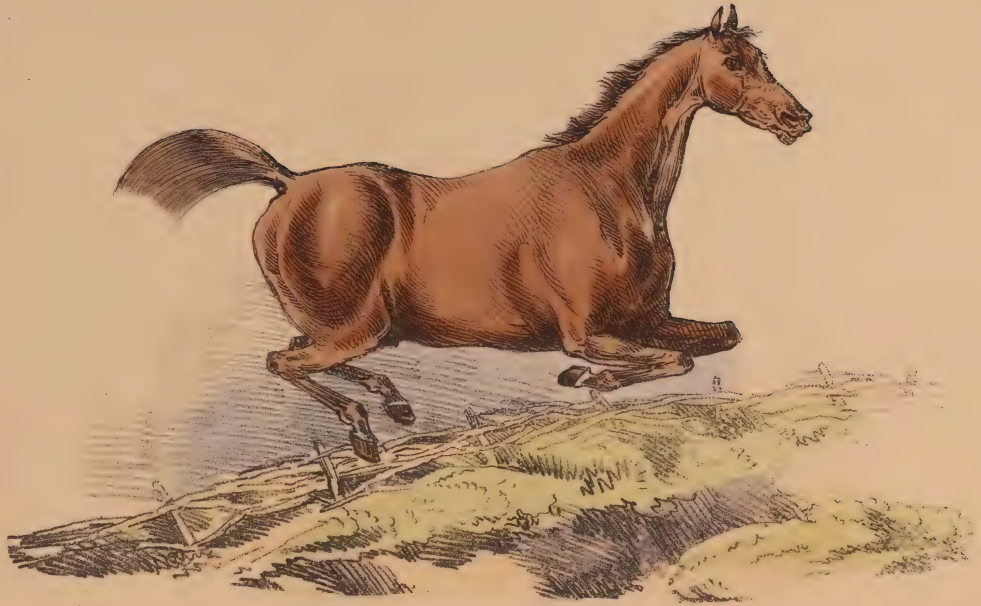

PLATE XVII.

THE BUCKING LEAP.

This leap is similar to the action of the deer; and the horse, in the performance of it, displays a very grand and prepossessing appearance. There ought to be a great distinction between the action of the animal, in this leap, and in that which I before described: for although I have just remarked on the propriety of the horse gathering his quarters under him, I do not consider this rule as applicable to the fly leap. It is but rarely indeed that any but very hot horses follow this method, which certainly is not a good one. In the first place, the action requires great exertion, both on the part of the rider and the horse, an effort which is not at all calculated for endurance: secondly, it is very dangerous, as the horse addicted to it seldom knows where to spring, or to take off from, or how to measure his leap; and it very often occurs that, having his head cleaving the air, he entirely forgets to put his fore-legs down to the ground, and consequently comes bolt on his knees and chest. I rode a mare which practised the bucking leap for two seasons; she was four years old, and excessively violent, although a powerful leaper as to height and distance. For the first season I had four or five falls a day, upon an average, and all in consequence of her violent mode of leaping.

PLATE XVIII.

THE FLY LEAP.

To compass this mode of leaping, it is necessary that the horse should be possessed of great strength and courage; for here the horse springs from all four legs at the same time, or at least so nearly so, that the difference is not perceptible. The fore-legs should be tucked tight under the body, the hind ones thrown as high and as far out as possible. To hunt in a country where such fences are used as the double timber fence, ditch between, it requires a horse well qualified; for to get on with any speed, the leaps must be made at once. I have been heartily tired even to see the trouble and patience it requires to perform the in and out.

For river leaping the same action is necessary, but it is not necessary that the legs should be so much gathered.

HINTS TO PURCHASERS OF HORSES.

There is no reason why the golden rule, "Do unto others as ye would that others should do unto you," should not obtain in horse-dealing, as well as in other trading transactions; that it does not, those who have suffered from a contrary practice will, of course, regret. There are, doubtless, many dealers of strict integrity who would not knowingly practise any deception, but would afford ample time for examination and trial, and would decline to give a warranty unless convinced of the animal's soundness. There are others who aver that they never give a warranty, and others who have a variety of tricks at command to deceive the unwary. It should be remembered there are few faultless horses, and though breeders must dispose of their young stock, whether faulty or faultless, it is not such horses that fall into the hands of the inexperienced buyer. The class of purchasers for whose assistance these hints have been written, generally buy from dealers, and most commonly the stud submitted for their inspection consists of horses that have been used and sold for some fault, or because "they did not suit their former owner." Yet, by the exercise of a little common sense, purchasers would often escape the cheats attempted to be put upon them by the outsiders in what should be an honourable occupation.

There are two questions which the intending purchaser of a horse should ask himself, and take care that they are fairly answered. The first is—"Can he, or can he not, ride well?" The next is—"What sort of work does he require a horse to do?" It is of more importance than at first sight appears, that these two questions should be fairly put, and honestly answered. For there are many men who have no other idea than to become the proprietor of

a good-looking animal, and there are some who think they can buy a horse as they would a walking-stick; while there are few, indeed, who think it necessary to put these two important questions to themselves, and fewer still who would feel comfortable under an imputation against their horsemanship, if made by another; still, they may "own the soft impeachment" to themselves. Yet a man cannot do a more foolish thing than to buy a horse merely because he is pleased with its outward appearance. An awkward rider will look more ungraceful on a high-spirited horse than on one of more modest pretensions, and he is more liable to throw such a horse down by the rough or careless way in which he manages his bridle.

I will suppose my reader has already determined the sort of work he wishes a horse to perform, and whether he can ride well or the contrary. Next he should fix on the price he intends to give, and allow no powers of persuasion on the part of the seller to alter his determination. The next thing is to consider that the seller, be he *dealer* or not, is, perhaps, equally as good a judge of his customer as he is of his horses. If, when the horse is brought out, his general appearance is satisfactory, it is prudent to see him through his paces before going through a closer inspection. A close observation of the action of a horse generally results in the discovery of those defective points which require the most severe scrutiny.

It is not so easy as at first sight appears to judge of a horse's action; in some of them it is much less easy to detect defective action than to discover the limp caused by disease. Difference in breeding will make considerable difference in the action. In a well-bred horse there is usually an absence of high action; he walks and trots slower, but his canter and gallop are more graceful, easy, and rapid than that of the half-bred; the head is smaller, the crest higher, the mane and tail more silky, the hocks and legs are flatter, or, as the dealers say, "cleaner;" the tendons of the muscles in the leg are more tense to the touch, and more distinctly developed; the pastern joints are usually longer, the feet smaller; the outline of the hind-legs, from the hock to the fetlock, is more upright; the root of the tail is better defined, and there is a general lightness and elas-

tacity about them. When mounted the mouth feels lighter, more lively, and there is a springiness of movement and appearance altogether different to that seen in a horse of inferior breed.

There are many men who do not take their weight into calculation when selecting a horse, and as they may always reckon one stone more for saddle and bridle, it is evident this is a matter of great importance, and should not be overlooked. Nothing will bring a dull, sluggish horse down sooner than being overweighted, even if it be only a few pounds; he feels unwilling to move under the additional weight; his rider, perhaps, loses temper, and urges him, and hence the catastrophe. Again, I remark, consider well the kind of work you require a horse to perform, remembering that there are very few, indeed, equally good for saddle and harness. If a daily ride of say ten or a dozen miles is the utmost required, almost any sound horse is equal to it if he is not over-weighted, or ridden at too fast a pace. If longer journeys are required, rest-days are necessary, and thirty miles a-day three days a-week is quite enough work for any horse, and too much for the majority.

I would advise my reader to be very cautious in availing himself of the many tempting offers made in the various newspapers. In going through the advertisement columns, it would appear at first sight as if every want could be most easily supplied, and especially is this the case respecting horses, the flattering encomiums passed upon them, leading one to expect perfection. Experienced hands never notice these advertisements, and I would strongly recommend those who do, to make no bargain till the animal has been seen by a respectable veterinary surgeon. Indeed, to the inexperienced buyer—and for such only are these hints intended—I would say, *the vet.'s fee is the best spent money throughout the transaction.*

Being satisfied as to figure and carriage, let the horse be walked and trotted down the ride at his own pace, repeating the experiment on the stones, and, if possible, down hill, the groom going before with the bridle at its extreme length.

Many grooms in showing a horse get a firm hold of the bridle close to the animal's head, and so supporting the head,

trot him along. This is the way to conceal lameness if there be any.

The motion from the shoulder should be bold and decided, the head well and evenly carried, the knee fairly bent, the feet placed fairly and firmly on the ground, and the toes in a direct line with the body, neither inclining to one side or the other. The hind-legs should be well gathered under the body, the toes fairly raised from the ground, and the hind feet spread pretty accurately in the impress of the fore feet. If they pass beyond this the very unpleasant noise termed "hammer and pincers," is heard. This is caused by the toe of the hind-foot striking against the shoe of the fore-foot, and though it may be prevented while the horse is being shown, by allowing the toe of the hind-foot to project a little before the shoe, which of course deadens the sound, yet it soon wears down when in actual work, and the disagreeable noise begins again. When the toes of the hind-feet drag the ground, disease in the hocks is indicated: an irregular carriage, or dropping of the head, indicates lameness. Very high action is objectionable: it wears and bruises the feet on hard roads; it is often very unpleasant for the rider, and (especially in horses with broad feet and soft heels), it causes the speedy cut from the foot striking against the inside of the opposite one. Very low action is equally objectionable; the toe has a tendency to strike any stone or accidental elevation of the ground, and even if the horse does not fall down, the hoof is worn nearly to the quick, and not seldom permanently injured. Some horses are apt in trotting to throw their feet very much outward or inward; either mode of going is unpleasant to the eye, and the latter is unsafe, but it is often found in fast trotters.

If the hind-legs are like those in *Figure* 7, Plate V., or like *Figure* 5, on the same Plate, the action in the trot will be ungraceful, and by no means easy for the rider. These faults are not uncommon in fast horses, and though they may not indicate unsoundness, yet they show a tendency to spavin and thorough-pin.

When the fore-legs incline a little forward at the knee, or are readily bent at a slight touch behind the knee, (a peculiarity which

is styled by the dealers "*Knuckling*"), it generally indicates that the horse has done a good deal of work, and if this is attended with a tremulous, tottering motion of the leg, the idea is confirmed, and though in a young horse it may be relieved by rest and blistering, he will never be able to do regular work.

To judge the height of a horse, let him stand on the level, and not as usually shown, with the fore-legs on rising ground; a difference of an inch or two is important both as regards his strength and his re-sale.

A man who is even a tolerable horseman would do well to choose a high-couraged (not a bad-tempered or vicious) horse, but one that is ready to go; such an animal will do more work, and do it much more pleasantly than one that is heavy and sluggish.

If the inspection is satisfactory so far, let the legs and feet be examined, and here a study of Plates IV. and V. will be of great use. Let the purchaser stand in front of the horse, and note the position and size of the hoofs when at rest; if the feet are very small, or one seems smaller than the other, there is good ground to suspect some serious defect. If there be no difference in the size of the feet, if the heels are not much contracted, if the frogs be sound, and there be no trace of matter oozing from the cleft, and if the horse puts his feet down boldly and firmly when trotted down-hill on rough ground, these points may be considered satisfactory, and the sole, or bottom of the foot, is next to be examined. In its natural state it is rather hollow or concave, but occasionally we find it flat, and sometimes convex. In either case it is proportionably thin, and less fit for the performance of its office than if it was concave. The convex form of sole is, however, a much more serious defect than the flat. A convex, or projecting sole, is extremely thin and, therefore, incapable of bearing much pressure; and though a horse may step firmly with this kind of sole, he is constantly liable to lameness from gravel getting under his shoe, and it frequently happens that the front or wall of the hoof has lost its natural form, and becomes flatter, thinner, and more brittle, so that it is difficult to nail a shoe securely without wounding or pricking the foot. This

defect constitutes unsoundness. While the sole is undergoing examination it will be advisable to look if there be any corns, but it is not so easy to discover them with the shoes on. If the corns are extensive, the foot convex, and the heels weak, the horse had better be rejected. The utmost care is necessary in examining the foot, there are so many causes of lameness that the inspection cannot be too particularly carried out. A horse may be lamed by bad shoeing, improper management, or some unknown cause, and though he may not appear lame at the time of purchase, yet from the appearance of the foot, lameness may reasonably be suspected.

Sand-crack is a serious defect, especially if it runs longitudinally from the coronet into the hoof, and is deep enough to affect the sensitive parts of the foot. Sometimes the sand-crack is only trifling, but its presence indicates an unnatural dryness of the horn, and tendency to sand-crack, and if such a horse be purchased, proper means should be at once employed to improve the state of the hoof.

Foot-lameness is frequently removed for a time by a long rest, or a run at grass. Horses that are foundered are frequently much relieved, and sometimes apparently cured by the same means, but in either case the lameness invariably returns when the horse is put to work again, or kept in a stable.

It should be remembered that there are few six-year old horses whose feet are not more or less imperfect, and that a considerable alteration in form may take place without causing lameness.

In examining the fore-legs, it is necessary to notice if there be any scar or wound, which generally arises from cutting; when the scar on the inside is large, or appears to have been recently opened, while the surrounding parts are thickened and appear swollen, it is a serious imperfection. The *speedy cut*, or cut on the inside, just below the knee-joint, is a serious defect, which not unfrequently causes a horse to fall while galloping or trotting.

In examining the back sinews the hand should be passed down the back part of the leg. If the tendon can be distinctly felt with the suspensory ligament which lies just before it, and the tendon feels clean and free from thickening, and if the leg, on a side view,

appears flat, clean, and sinewy, it may be passed as a sound, well-formed leg. But if the leg, on a side view, appears rather round than flat, or rather bent and inclining inwards; if one leg is larger than the other, or the sinew and ligament cannot be distinctly and separately felt, it follows that the part has been injured in some way, and it is probable the horse will fall lame on being put to hard work.

Should there be any mark on the knee it will be safer for the purchaser to infer that it was caused by falling, whatever the seller may say to the contrary.

Splents need not be regarded, unless they are of a large size, immediately below the knee-joint, or so near to the back sinew or suspensory ligament as to impede their action, or unless they are tender on being pressed. Few horses are entirely free from splents.

The examination of the hind-legs should be commenced at the hock. The bones forming the projection on the inside of the hock, are larger in some horses than in others, and should not be mistaken for bone spavin. There is no insuperable difficulty in noticing the distinction, for if both hocks be spavined, it very rarely happens they are both of the same size, or exactly alike, and when only one hock is so affected the difference is sufficiently distinct to determine the question. The best way to ascertain if there be any spavin is to look from between the fore-legs to between the hocks, rather inclining to one side. A side view of the hocks will best enable you to see if there be a curb, and a close inspection will show if there be any ring-bone upon the pastern. This latter, though a considerable defect, does not always produce lameness, but more frequently in the fore than the hind-leg.

Some horses have a tendency to a discharge from the heels, attended by swelling of the hind-legs, which constitutes the disease termed grease. Horses with white legs seem more disposed to this complaint than others. If the hind-legs appear swollen, with the hair about the heels rough or furzy; if there be scars on the heels, and they appear to have been subject to cracks or ulcers, it may be inferred that the horse is subject to swelled legs and grease.

The bottom of the hind-foot should be examined to see that it is not affected with canker or thrushes.

Too much caution cannot be observed in examining the eye. After seven years of age the eye of the horse seldom becomes diseased, except from injury to which all ages are equally liable. From five to six years is the age most liable to eye-disease, and next from four to five, so in purchasing a five-year old horse, caution on this point is specially necessary. The most favourable situation for viewing the eye is at the stable door, or under a shed, for where too much light falls on the eye so much is reflected by its surface, or cornea, that it is difficult to see the internal parts.

If there be a perceptible difference between the eyes, if they appear watery, cloudy, or dull, if the lids be more closed than is natural, or if the inner corner of the eye-lid appears puckered up, there is strong reason for suspicion that the sight is imperfect, and the horse unsound on this point. The pupil, or dark blueish oblong spot in the centre of each eye, should be closely and carefully scrutinized, and if any difference is perceived in their size, if they appear cloudy, or if white specks are seen in them, disease is indicated. An important point is to ascertain that both eyes appear exactly alike, that they become (alike) smaller when exposed to a strong light, and (alike) larger when in the shade. The seller is generally ready to affirm that any blemish arises from some external cause, as a blow, a bite, or some hayseed or dust getting into the eye, but this should not be relied on, for in most cases any disease in a horse's eye arises from internal causes.

Some horses possess greater freedom in breathing than others, and it is easy to understand that a deep, wide chest, short neck, wide gullet, and large open nostril, betoken superior wind. There is no difficulty in discovering when a horse is thoroughly broken-winded; the laborious breathing or working of the flanks, and the short asthmatic cough exhibited under any violent exertion, are too evident; but between this state and perfect health there are many stages of the disorder, and these are most difficult of detection. There are two kinds of disease affecting the wind: one having its seat in the

windpipe, producing whistling and roaring; the other in the lungs, producing broken wind. To detect the former there is no surer way than to gallop the horse, and agitate and pull him about, keeping the bridle tightly curbed. In this way the wheezing is almost certain to be heard if it exists. The same mode of action will detect roaring, and a roarer should be at once rejected.

The state of the wind is frequently ascertained by grasping the windwipe at the throat tightly, and then *immediately* letting it go; the horse is certain to cough, and the sound of the cough determines pretty accurately the state of his wind. If it be long and shrill, the wind is good; if it be short and hacking, like that of a person in asthma, his lungs are affected, and the horse must at once be rejected; but unless the purchaser can distinguish between the different kinds of cough, he may as well pinch his own throat as the horse's, and, indeed, the former would often be the safer course.

If a horse coughs under any circumstances during examination, ascertain, if possible, if the cough be of long duration; and if there is any difficulty in obtaining the desired information, see that you are secured on that point by the warrants.

The age of the horse is known by the appearance of the mouth, and certain marks on the teeth; but so many tricks are resorted to, to make the age appear what it is *wished* to be rather than what it *is*, that a veterinary surgeon's opinion, or a distinct warranty on this point are the only safeguards for the uninitiated.

In concluding these few hints, I would say, in every doubtful point, be sure your warranty covers it. Never buy a screw, and take care that the animal, the weight, and the work are put on at least equal terms. But I must be permitted to add, that to a man who only thinks he knows something of horses, the veterinary surgeon (not the farrier or smith), is the best guide he can have.